**Remarks**

Claims 1-7 are pending.

Claims 1-3, 6 and 7 stand rejected.

Claims 4 and 5 are objected to.

Claim 1 is amended.

Claims 1-7 are submitted herein for review.

No new matter has been added.

In paragraph 1 of the Office Action, the Examiner has rejected claims 1-3 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Sabatino et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,253,332). In paragraph 3 of the Office Action, the Examiner has rejected claim 6 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sabatino in view of Viduya (U.S. Patent No. 5,706,372). In paragraph 4 of the Office Action, the Examiner has rejected claim 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sabatino in view of Anderson Jr. (U.S. Patent No. 4,580,703). Applicant notes that in paragraph 5 of the Office Action, the Examiner has indicated that claims 4 and 5 would be allowed if re-written in independent format.

Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner's contentions and submits the following remarks in response.

The present invention as claimed in independent claim 1 is directed to a fluid meter, in particular a water meter. The water meter has a tank having a bottom and into which a measuring chamber is inserted through an opening opposite the bottom, in an insertion direction, parallel to the tank's axis of symmetry. The measuring chamber has at least one lateral orifice connected in a sealed manner to a pipe of said tank via a compressible seal. The seal is disposed

around said orifice and is compressed between an external surface of the chamber, called the first surface, and an internal surface of the tank, called the second surface. These first and second surfaces are inclined relative to the axis of symmetry of the tank, and the minimum distance between the first and second surfaces and the axis of symmetry is near the bottom of the tank.

In this arrangement, the compressible seal between the first external surface of the chamber and the second internal surface of the tank, used to seal the orifice entrance of the chamber to the tank's pipe, is protected when the chamber is slid into the tank so that it does not become dislodged or ripped, a drawback associated with the prior art as noted on page 3, paragraph 1 of the specification.

Because the first outer surface of the chamber and the second inner surface of the tank are inclined relative to the axis of symmetry of the tank, and because the minimum distance between the first and second surfaces and the axis of symmetry is near the bottom of the tank, the seal does not contact the internal second surface of the tank until the chamber is in the final assembly position as noted on page 6 lines 16-28 of the specification. This assures that the seal does not contact the inner side wall of the tank until it reaches the bottom of the tank and thus does not undergo any pulling or tearing stresses during the chamber insertion process as is the case in prior art configurations.

This is in sharp contrast to the cited prior art. The Examiner cites the Sabatino reference as the basis of the rejection of independent claim 1. The Sabatino reference teaches a sealed flow meter for in-tank installation, generally for use with fuel tanks. Sabatino shows a tank 13 with an opening therein into which sealed housing 10 is inserted, as shown in Fig. 1. Later in column 7 of Sabatino, a fuel inlet line 38, located within the tank 13, is shown that enters the housing 10 at a fitting 40.

It is noted however, that unlike the present invention, line 38 is not part of tank 13, nor is fitting 40 a compressible seal. Furthermore, it is clear from Fig. 1 of Sabatino that at the connection between the pipe 38 and the housing 10, there is no compressible seal between the outer wall of the housing 10 and the inner wall of the tank 13. In fact, the tank wall does not contact the housing 10 anywhere near the point where inlet pipe 38 enters housing 10.

Additionally, Sabatino shows a housing 10 with a flange 11a that is placed downwardly into the tank 13 such that the flange 11a of the housing 10 nests into a corresponding flange on the tank13. However, Fig. 1 and the accompanying description do not show an arrangement where the inner surface of the tank 13 and the outer surface of the housing 10 are inclined relative to an axis of symmetry in the tank 13 nor does it show such an incline where the surfaces are closest to the axis of symmetry near the bottom of the tank 13.

As such, there is no teaching or suggestion in the Sabatino reference that discloses all of the elements of the present invention as claimed in claim 1. For example, there is no teaching or suggestion in Sabatino that discloses a measurement chamber having at least one lateral orifice connected in a sealed manner to a pipe of the tank via a *compressible seal that is disposed around the orifice and that is compressed between an external surface of the chamber, called the first surface, and an internal surface of the tank, called the second surface*. On the contrary, as noted above Sabatino shows now such compressible seal nor does it even have an interface between the chamber/housing and the tank at an area near the inlet pipe.

Likewise, there is no teaching or suggestion in Sabatino that discloses first and second surfaces inclined relative to the axis of symmetry of the tank, where the minimum distance between the first and second surfaces and the axis of symmetry is near the bottom of the tank. As noted above, there is no analogous inclining of surfaces relative to an axis of symmetry in the

tank in the Sabatino reference.

As such, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of independent claim 1 be withdrawn. Furthermore, as claims 2-7 depend therefrom, these claims should be allowed for the same reason.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that pending claims 1-7 are in condition for allowance, the earliest possible notice of which is earnestly solicited. If the Examiner feels that an interview would facilitate the prosecution of this Application they are invited to contact the undersigned at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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